



Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Guidelines

September 3, 2020 FINAL DRAFT

Introduction

All Californians have the right to access the coast and to live in a healthy environment.

The State Coastal Conservancy's vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coast for current and future generations of Californians. We act with others to protect and restore, and increase public access to, California's coast, ocean, coastal watersheds, and the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Coastal Conservancy recognizes that a history of injustice, exclusion, displacement and extractive processes towards California's Native Americans, Black people, people of color, and other frontline communities has resulted in inequitable access to the coast and its resources that persists today. In addition, the environmental burdens of development and industry have been disproportionately borne by these populations, while environmental preservation and restoration have primarily benefitted the affluent.

The Coastal Conservancy recognizes that we have not done enough to address inequities along the California coast and commits to addressing injustices and inequities. Striving to move forward in an equitable, inclusive manner, the Coastal Conservancy will:

- Improve its policies, programs, and practices to advance equitable access to the environmental, social, and economic benefits of California's coast and coastal watersheds.
- Regularly evaluate and modify program priorities, grant funding, contracting, hiring practices, communications, and community engagement practices, to address existing inequities and prevent additional inequities.
- Increase the involvement and role of under-served and/or frontline communities in decision-making by the Conservancy.

Nexus with Coastal Conservancy Programs

State legislation establishes the Coastal Conservancy's programs and guides funding criteria and priorities. Through these programs, the Coastal Conservancy can strive to promote equitable outcomes for all Californians, especially under-served and/or frontline communities.

- **Explore the Coast:** Increase access to the coast for all Californians, reduce barriers to coastal access, and provide coastal experience for youth and adults that may face challenges getting to or enjoying the coast.
- **Protect and Restore the Coast:** Ensure the benefits of healthy ecosystems, clean water, wetlands, working lands, urban parks, and open space are provided to all Californians.
- **Climate Ready:** Increase both social and ecological resilience to climate change and reduce climate change impacts on underserved and/or frontline communities within Coastal Conservancy jurisdiction.
- **Geographic Programs:** Increase public access and protect and restore natural resources in the Santa Ana River Watershed and in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Guidelines

1. Partnerships

- Build relationships with community-based organizations that are rooted in and serve underserved and/or frontline communities.
- Support people and organizations that are advocating for equity and environmental justice.
- Work with community-based organizations to co-vision desired future conditions and provide technical assistance to build their capacity to plan, fund, and implement projects aligned with the Coastal Conservancy's program areas.
- Provide assistance to community-based organizations in applying for and managing grants.

2. Funding Programs

- Fund programs and projects that increase equity and environmental justice throughout the Coastal Conservancy's geographic jurisdiction.
- Prioritize funding for projects that benefit underserved and/or frontline communities.
- Develop and implement grant programs with input from communities.
- In grant programs, include funding for education, workforce development, and jobs related to conservation.
- Reduce barriers to accessing and spending Coastal Conservancy grant funding.
- Remain flexible throughout the grant process to support the needs of grantees and communities.

3. Meaningful Community Engagement

- Engage with communities with cultural humility to build mutual trust and relationships.
- Meet communities where they are, physically and in terms of their priorities.
- Ensure underserved and/or frontline communities have a decision-making role in the development of Coastal Conservancy-funded projects.

- Engage with communities in public co-visioning processes before projects are developed to generate community-ownership and project ideas anchored in community expertise.
- Value and invest in community expertise. Ensure funds go to community-based organizations to lead community engagement to promote equitable project processes and outcomes.

4. Working with California's Tribes

- Ensure consultation with tribes occurs early in project development and throughout project implementation.
- Ensure tribal concerns are respected and archaeological and cultural resources are protected.
- Seek solutions to state contracting issues that affect the sovereignty of tribes.
- Assist tribes to regain access to their ancestral lands on the coast through the Conservancy's land conservation or access programs.
- Work with tribes to enable traditional stewardship and cultural practices on ancestral land and co-management of their ancestral lands and natural resources.
- Ensure programs include indigenous voices, leadership, and perspectives, including traditional ecological knowledge, indigenous stewardship, and educational programs.

5. Coastal Conservancy Staff and Board

- Strive for workforce to reflect California's diversity across all departments and levels and cultivate an inclusive culture within the Coastal Conservancy.
- The Coastal Conservancy is governed by a seven-member Board appointed by the Governor and California Legislature. To extent possible, support efforts for the Board to reflect California's diversity.
- Articulate equity and environmental justice values in the Coastal Conservancy's Strategic Plan.
- Ensure that the Coastal Conservancy participates in ongoing workshops and dialogue about equity and environmental justice to improve cultural humility.
- Ensure Coastal Conservancy project staff prioritize equity and environmental justice in their work and are supported by management.

6. Accountability and Transparency

- Include accountability metrics for equity and environmental justice objectives in the Coastal Conservancy's Strategic Plan; track and report on these metrics annually.
- Regularly assess where the Coastal Conservancy has and has not invested funding. Evaluate the impacts of our grant programs in advancing equity.

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Definitions of Terms

- Community engagement
 - The process of working collaboratively with groups of people who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests, or similar situations with respect to issues affecting their well-being.¹
- Cultural humility
 - The practice of self-reflection on how one's own background and expectations impact a situation, of openness to others' determining the relevance of their own identities to any given situation, and of committing to redress the effects of power imbalances.²
- Diversity
 - A range of differences in characteristics of people, such as socioeconomic status, race, culture, age, gender, physical and mental ability, social identities, and lived experiences.
 - Differences between people that lead to different experiences in systemic advantages or encounters with systemic barriers to opportunities.³
- Environmental justice
 - The principle that all people should have access to healthy, safe, livable communities and environments.^{4,5}
 - This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys: 1) the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, 2) equitable access to environmental benefits, opportunities, and services and 3) equitable access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, work, and play.⁶

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

² American Library Association

³ The Avarna Group

⁴ California Environmental Justice Alliance

⁵ Communities for a Better Environment

⁶ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

- Equity
 - Fairness of achieving outcomes for all groups and no one factor, such as race, can be used to predict outcomes. Equity is defined in the context of social and racial equity.⁷
- Frontline communities
 - Communities that experience the consequences of climate change first and worst.⁸
 - These may include communities with low-income or low levels of educational attainment; the LGBTQ community; people with disabilities; immigrants; and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
- Inclusion
 - Creation of a welcoming environment 1) where people's differences are represented and respected; 2) that embraces multicultural and indigenous histories and presence; and 3) cultivates community empowerment, care of natural resources, personal connections, and a sense of ownership.⁹
- Meaningful involvement
 - people have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health;
 - the public's contribution can influence the agency's decision;
 - community concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and
 - decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.¹⁰
- Underserved communities
 - These communities have been historically and are still often systematically excluded from political and policy-making processes as well as government investments.
 - Because of these systems, these communities have insufficient funds, resources, or other assets to address environmental issues.

⁷ San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

⁸ Ecotrust

⁹ Coro Fellows Program

¹⁰ California Coastal Commission